



Circe Woessner of the 377th Mission Support Squadron's Distance Learning Center was selected as the Air Force Materiel Command 2002 Support Training Manager.



Tech. Sgt. Rick Jourden of the 377th Mission Support Squadron's Education and Training Flight was selected as the Air Force Materiel Command 2002 Base Level Education and Training Manager.



Staff Sgt. Oriana Gandara of the Military Personnel Flight was selected as the Air Force Materiel Command 2002 Outstanding Personnel Technician of the Year, NCO Category.



Perry V. Mitchell Sr. of the 377th Air Base Wing's Safety Office, was selected as the Air Force Materiel Command 2002 Outstanding Safety Specialist/Technician.

TEAM KIRTLAND people, units honored as AFMC's best

Military Personnel Flight
in the 377th Mission Support Squadron earned the Air Force Materiel Command's Garrett Foster Outstanding Achievement Award.

Education Center
was selected as the 2002 Best Education Services Center Category II in Air Force Materiel Command for the fourth consecutive year.

377th Air Base Wing Inspector General
office for the second consecutive year received the Air Force Materiel Command John P. Flynn Inspector General Award.



Airman picked for SOARS

Airman 1st Class Michael Ross of the 377th Mission Support Squadron was selected for the Scholarships for Outstanding Airmen to ROTC Selection Board.



Legendary mentors Ben Benjamin, left, along with seven other senior mentors at Sandia National Laboratories, were recognized with the Exemplary Civilian Service Award. Brig. Gen. Robert Smolen, Nuclear and Counterproliferation director at the Pentagon, right, visited Kirtland AFB to decorate the eight mentors whose contributions included work on the Manhattan Project, nuclear surveillance and Pershing II missile warhead projects. Andy Rogulich, center, also received the award.

Courtesy photo

HONORING LEGENDS

Sandia mentors presented Exemplary Civilian Service Awards

BY CAPT. MARK D. GLISSMAN
Sandia National Laboratories

Rarely in life do we get the opportunity to meet people of history. Serving in the military, we occasionally get to attend a ceremony where such a legend as a Medal of Honor recipient or an air ace honors us with his presence. Afterward we shake his hand and say "thank you."

As an Air Force Nuclear Technology Fellow at Sandia National Laboratories Weapon Intern Program, I not only get to shake legends' hands on a daily basis, I enjoy the privilege of their calling me "friend." That is an exceptional honor shared by roughly 100 interns, including nine U.S. Air Force officers, who by interacting with senior mentor personnel volunteering their time to mold the next generation of professional weaponers.

This program began in 1998

and about 20 new personnel begin each new year, including three DOD personnel. These personnel apply for an internship in the programs throughout the nuclear weapons complex, DOD, Department of Energy, Sandia National Laboratories and the Kansas City Honeywell Production Plant. We deem selection as an honor; and we deem interaction with legends as a privilege.

Brig. Gen. Robert Smolen, director of Nuclear and Counterproliferation at the Pentagon, recently visited Kirtland AFB to honor some of these historical legends. He decorated eight of them with the Department of the Air Force Exemplary Civilian Service Award in appreciation for their contributions to the nation and the U.S. Air Force. Although most of these recipients served in uniform, they all served (and still do) out of uniform.

Smolen said, "These people

made history and are now giving it to a new generation." He went on to call the Weapon Intern Program a "pinnacle program helping to preserve the nuclear weapons program for the future." He should know better than anyone, as he served an instrumental role in creating the program.

Who are these legends? They are Ben Benjamin, Manhattan Project, Nevada Test Site, Field Engineering; Dr. John Hogan, Pershing II Missile Warhead lead engineer, academic dean, senior scientist; Bill Patterson, father of the B61-11, systems engineer, principal to U.S./United Kingdom Joint Group; Harold Rarrick, Nuclear Surveillance, Manzano Base, Salton Sea Test Base; Andy Rogulich, aircraft systems nuclear certification engineer, program manager, air-

craft monitor and control systems engineer; Tom Schultheis, weaponer, field test engineer, Proton Acceleration; Leon Smith, Manhattan Project weaponer, National Security Agency advisor, systems engineer for Little Boy and Fat Man; Dr. Harold Walling, professor, Nevada Test Site, explosives engineer.

All in all, these men have provided almost half a millennium of experience and their contributions still to this day ensure the security of this nation.

I wish we could give more to these men for the service and sacrifice they each have made and continue to make to this great nation. Perhaps they will accept the general's medal and my heartfelt "thank you" as a grateful American Airman.